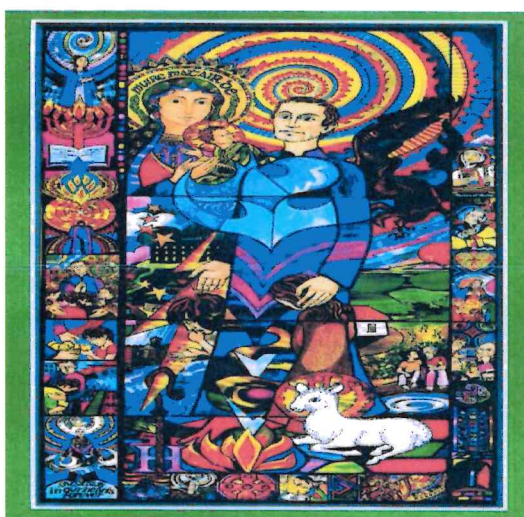




O Connell Primary Exemption from study of Irish



An Edmund Rice School

O Connell Primary
Irish Exemption Policy

Nov 2023

Introduction

This policy was drafted by the principal, SET Coordinator and Board of Management of **O CONNELL PRIMARY** in response to recent changes in Special Educational provisions.

Rationale

Circular 0054/2022 advises Primary Schools of the revised arrangements for the exemption of pupils from the study of Irish. The language component of the Primary Curriculum is for all pupils and comprises of both English and Irish. In exceptional circumstances, some pupils may be granted an exemption from the study of Irish.

Relationship to the school Ethos:

This policy is in keeping with the mission statement of the school, which strives to enhance the self-esteem through providing for the intellectual, physical, moral and cultural needs of all.

Aims and Objectives

- To allow for pupils of differing abilities, interests and circumstances
- To enhance inclusivity within the school
- To enable children of all abilities to access the curriculum in a learner friendly manner

Granting an exemption from the study of Irish

Since September 2019, with the publishing of Circular 0052/2019, the onus has been placed on schools to ascertain whether a student should qualify for and be granted an exemption from the study of Irish. Exempting a pupil from the study of Irish should be considered only in exceptional circumstances. The decision to exempt a pupil from the study of Irish is an important decision that has implications for his/her access to the curriculum and his/her future learning. The decision to grant an exemption from the study of Irish is made by the principal teacher, but it must be made following detailed discussion with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), the class teacher, special education teachers, and the pupil. The school will follow the procedure directed by the updated circular 0054/2022.

Exemptions are essentially only available to

- **A pupil moving from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language.**
- **A pupil who experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to their learning across the curriculum**
- **A pupil who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life.**
- **A pupil in a recognised¹ special school or class or who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class or who has a recommendation² and has been deemed eligible³ for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school**
- **A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history**
- **pupils who:**

¹ A school or class that is recognised by the Department of Education as a special school or class for the purpose of the Special Educational Needs Act 2004.

(i) have at least reached second class

and

(ii). present with significant learning difficulties that are persistent despite having had access to a differentiated approach to language and literacy learning in both Irish and English over time. Documentary evidence to this effect, held by the school, should include Student Support Plans detailing

- regular reviews of learning needs as part of an ongoing cycle of assessment
 - target-setting
 - evidence-informed intervention and review, including test scores (word reading, reading comprehension, spelling, other scores of language/literacy) at key points of review.

and

(iii) at the time of the application for exemption present with a standardised score on a discrete test in either Word Reading, Reading Comprehension or Spelling at/below the 10th percentile.

- children of foreigners who are diplomatic or consular representatives in Ireland

An examination of whether a student should be considered for an Irish exemption can be started in 3 ways:

1. A request from a parent/guardian. (Appendix 1)

- i. Consultation will take place between the Support Coordinator and teachers as to whether a student would benefit or not from an Irish exemption. If in the experience of the teachers it is felt they would not benefit, parents will be strongly recommended that an exemption should not be pursued at this time.
- ii. If it is felt the student would benefit from an exemption, the Support Coordinator will ascertain through assessment whether the student fits the testing criteria.
- iii. If the student fits the criteria, the school will begin the formal paperwork process as outlined in the Irish Exemption Guidelines involving parental application, sharing of information, checklist of actions to be taken and the Certificate of Exemption.

2. The school will monitor every pupil with regard to whether, in the school's view, that the pupil might benefit from being considered for an Irish Exemption. The circular directs that any such application must be initiated by the parents / guardian. Therefore the school will, in cases where it is of the view that a pupil might benefit from an Irish Exemption , proceed as follows.

Support Coordinator or SET Teacher's analysis of testing scores indicating it is likely a student may be eligible for an exemption.

- i. a consultation will take place between the Support Coordinator and class teachers as to whether a student would benefit or not from an Irish exemption. If in the experience of the teachers it is felt they would not benefit, then an exemption will not be pursued until a parent makes an application.
- ii. If it is felt the student would benefit from an exemption, the class teacher will consult with parents to ascertain if it something the parents would like to pursue.
- iii. If the parents wish to pursue an exemption, the Support Coordinator will ascertain through assessment whether the student fits the testing criteria.
- iv. If the student fits the criteria, the school will begin the formal paperwork process

3. A request from a class teacher.

- i. Support Coordinator will ascertain through assessment whether the student fits the testing criteria.
- ii. If they fit the criteria, the class teacher will consult with the parents
- iii. If the parent / guardian wishes to proceed, the school will help them begin the formal paperwork process.

Recording the decision

The outcome of the application process will be conveyed by the school principal in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Where an exemption is granted, a Certificate of Exemption, signed and dated by the school principal will be issued. (Appendix 2)

The Certificate of Exemption will also state the name and address of the school, the school roll number, the pupil's name, date of birth and the sub-paragraph under which the exemption is being granted.

Parents/guardians and pupils should be informed of the option not to exercise the exemption granted at that time, without any loss of the right to exercise it at a future time.

To support inclusive practice, pupils who are exempt from the study of Irish will be included in a meaningful way in aspects of Irish language and cultural activities in line with his/her ability and interests. Pupils will remain in the class during the Irish lesson so that they may have an opportunity to gain a knowledge of spoken Irish and to participate in the learning activities.

Appeal

Where the application for exemption from the study of Irish is refused, a parent/guardian can appeal the school's decision to the Irish Exemptions Appeal Committee (IEAC). The deliberations of the IEAC will focus solely on the process the school engaged in reaching its decision. The IEAC will consider how the school followed the process as prescribed in this Circular and the accompanying Guidelines for Primary Schools.

An appeal must be lodged within 30 calendar days from the date the decision of the school not to grant an exemption was notified in writing to the parent(s)/guardian(s). The Irish Exemptions Appeal Form and Guidelines for Primary Schools can be accessed at

www.education.ie/en/Parents/Information/Irish-Exemption/

Roles and Responsibilities:

In-school Management, class teachers, Board of Management will contribute to the implementation of school procedures.

Ratification of Exemption from Irish Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 13th Nov 23

Signed: Chris P...
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: Richard ...
Principal

Date: 13-11-23

Date: 13-11-23

Date of next review: Nov 25

Appendix 1

Application for Exemption from the Study of Irish Primary Schools For completion by the parent(s)/guardian(s)	
Name of pupil	
Date of birth	
Class	
Name of school	
I/We wish to apply for an exemption from the study of Irish on behalf of _____	
<i>Please indicate (✓) the ground for applying for an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with Circular 0054/2022.</i>	
2.1 A pupil moving from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language. 2.2 A pupil who experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to their learning across the curriculum 2.3 A pupil who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life. 2.4. A pupil in a recognised ⁴ special school or class <u>or</u> who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class <u>or</u> who has a recommendation ⁵ and has been deemed eligible ⁶ for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school 2.5 c. A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide detail of any supporting documentation being submitted to the school 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____	
I/we the undersigned understand that documentation provided may be reviewed for the purpose of processing this application by relevant school personnel and other professionals where necessary. Signed _____ Date: _____ Signed _____ Date: _____	
For the school: Date of receipt of application: _____	
Principal: _____ Date: _____ School roll number: _____	



Appendix 2

CERTIFICATE OF EXEMPTION FROM THE STUDY OF IRISH Circular0054/2022

Name of pupil: _____

Date of birth: _____

Name of school: _____ Roll Number: _____

School Address: _____

The above-named pupil has been granted an exemption from the study of Irish in accordance with the terms of Circular 0052/2019 and on the grounds of the following exceptional circumstance (please ✓ as appropriate):

- 2.1 A pupil moving from a different country without previous experience of learning the Irish language. ☐
- 2.2 A pupil who experiences significant literacy difficulties which are an obstacle to learning across the curriculum ☐ their
- 2.3 A pupil who experiences a high level of multiple and persistent needs that are a significant barrier to the pupil's participation and engagement in their learning and school life. ☐
- 2.4. A pupil in a recognised⁷ special school or class or who was previously enrolled in a recognised special school or class or who has a recommendation⁸ and has been deemed eligible⁹ for a place in a recognised special school and/or in a special class in a mainstream school ☐
- 2.5 c. A pupil whose parent(s)/guardian(s) is a/are diplomatic or consular representative(s) of another country to Ireland irrespective of age or educational history ☐

Possible implications of exemption from the study of Irish for my son/daughter have been explained to me.

Signed: _____
Parent/Guardian

Signed: _____
Parent/Guardian

Date: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____
School principal

Date: _____